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THE OBSERVATOR.

An Account of the five Mails arriv'd from Holland. *Remarks on the News.*

From **Saturday** April the 20th, to **Wednesday** April the 24th, 1706.

Obſ. COuntry-man, the Wind has ſtood fair for ſome time; and therefore I hope you have brought me ſome News.

Country-m. Maſter, there are five Mails come, but they have brought very bad News.

Obſ. Bad or Good let me hear it. We cannot expect always good News. Every thing varies ſometimes; the Heavens themſelves are not always the ſame: We have ſometimes fair Weather, ſometimes foul, ſometimes a *Serene Air*, ſometimes *Hurricanes* and *Tempeſts*, and that in Seaſons when we leaſt expect it, and think it moſt prejudicial, and yet, by the Wiſdom of the *Supream Governour* of the *Univerſe*, it turns to the Advantage of Mankind; it is often ſo in *Publick Affairs*; the Occurrences that at firſt ſeem Portentous and foreboding *Deſtruction* and *Ruin*, in the Cataſtrophe prove quite contrary. A *Gueſs* may be made, but no *Rational Concluſion* can be form'd of things at firſt ſight. Let me hear this News? Thou knoweſt I have often help'd thee in a *Deſponding Condition*, and brought thee even from the Brink of *Deſpair* concerning the *Publick Wellfare*.

Country-m. Barcelona is *Beſieged* both by Sea and Land, and the King of *Spain* is in the Town. The *High-Flyers* and *Jacks* are Wagering again that it will be *Taken* in a little time. Maſter, my Heart is almoſt broke; it's got an Inch below my Girdle; *October* won't fetch it up again: I ſhall fall into the *Hyppo*.

Obſ. My Friend *Roger* a *Coward!* Haſt forgot my Maxim? *Nunquam de R. P. deſperandum eſt. Never deſpair of the Publick Welfare.* I'll have it Written in Letters of Gold in thy Hall, that it may always be in thy Memory. *Deſpair* is an abominable thing, and always an Enemy to God and Man. When a Sinner begins to Repent of his Sin, and Sincerely deſigns to turn to *God*, the *Devil* preſently tempts him to *Deſpair* of the Mercy of *God* in *Chriſt*, the worſt Sin that can be; in like manner his Children, the *High-Flyers*, when we have the greateſt hopes of *Succeſs*, tempt us to *Deſpair* of the *Publick Welfare* from ſome ſeeming Diſadvantages. They are *Reſtleſs*, *Envious* and *Malicious*. But, *Country-man*, we'll Diſcourſe the Point fairly, and ſee if I can't fetch up your Heart, do that which *Potent October* can't do, drive away the *Vapours*, and baniſh your *Melancholy Thoughts*.

You ſay that *Barcelona* is *Beſieged*; what if it be? It is not *Taken*; there's Ten Thouſand Blows to that Bargain. You ſay the *High-Flyers* Wager that it will be *Taken*, they ever did Wager againſt the *Common Intereſt*, and ſo much the better, they are grown Poor by the Bargain; and I believe as this is *Anjou*'s laſt Squeak for his Life, ſo it will be the diſcovery of the bottom of his Friends Purſes in *England*.

I ſay this is *Anjou*'s laſt Squeak; and all Wiſe Men thought he would make the moſt Vigorous Efforts for the Recovery of *Catalonia*; for whilſt the King of *Spain* is Maſter of *Catalonia*, *Anjou* cannot call himſelf Maſter of *Spain*. He has left *Spain* Defenceleſs to gain that Principality which he muſt Recover or loſe ALL. When things are come to a *Criſis*, to an Extreamity of *Publick Concerns*, we ſoon expect an Account of a *Final Concluſion*, and thus are things in that *Quarter*. The Fate of *Spain* will ſoon be decided, and that, I hope, and pray, in Favour of the Injur'd *Houſe of Auſtria*.

We cannot dive into the Womb of *Providence*, whoſe dark Receſſes are not Penetrable by Humane Eyes, or Fathomable by Humane Conception; but we may judge of *Publick Affairs* according to their Poſture, which is no foreſtalling of *Providence*, or in any wiſe Impious. And tho' the Enemies of the *Confederacy* may amuſe the Minds of Unthinking Men about this Siege of *Barcelona*, I make no queſtion to prove it for the beſt, and that the King of *Spain*, in all Humane Probility, is in better Circumſtances than before.

You ſeem concern'd that the King of *Spain* is in the Town; why, Man, he is as ſafe there as any where elſe: He is there in his Poſt, in the way of his Duty, in defence of his Right, and for the recovery of *It*; he has the ſame *Providence* to protect him there as elſewhere; he has his Faithful Subjects about him, who will venture Life and Limb in his Service. Were he in the Army any where, he is expos'd to the ſame Fate of War; let a Man be engag'd, if he ſtands, if he ſits, if he lies down, if he turns himſelf into a Circle like a *Cat*, his Body is alike expos'd to the Chance of Shot, we can't ſhun our Fate, and 'tis better to run to what we cannot avoid.

Let Humane Conjecture here take Place, and let us conſider this Siege in reſpect of the Land and Sea, and ſee what Humane Probability will afford us.

By Land the City of *Barcelona* is better Fortify'd than ever, particularly Fort *Montjovi*; and tho' the *French* are got before the Town in a Body, they are not Maſters of the Country. This you ſee from the *French* Accounts, for the *Miquelets* make 'em very uneaſie in their Camp, as they themſelves confeſs.

Country-m. Maſter, what Fellows are thoſe *Miquelets*?

Obſ. They are the Country People in Arms in Defence of their King and Kingdom, Themſelves and their Families.

Country-m. Why, then they are juſt ſuch Fellows as I, and our *Will* and *Tom*, and my Neighbour *Stephen* and *George*. Wou'd they had an Hundred Thouſand Tun of *October*, ſuch as we are now Drinking, and a Proportion of ſuch *Beef* and *Pudding* as we had to Day for Dinner.

Nay,

way, Maſter, if the King of *Spain* has got the Honeſt Country Fellows on his ſide, I'll lay my Head to a *Turnip* that he'll carry his Cauſe. I'll tell you what, Maſter, I don't know but the *Emperour*, this Kings Father, was more beholden to the *Tyrol Boors* than to all his *Regular Troops*. Come, Maſter, here's a good Health to the *Miquelets*.

Obſ. I'll Pledge thee Heartily, *Roger*. And I can aſſure you thoſe People will be very uſeful during this Siege. *Anjou* has, he knows not how many Enemies in his Rear. Theſe People, tho' not form'd into *Regular Bodies*, will be a perpetual Plague to his *Perkinſhip*; they'll take all Advantages to diſturb him; and when they are over-power'd, preſently they retire to their Faſtneſſes in the Mountains, where the Beſiegers can't ſpare Troops to follow them, and if they could, 'twould be but to little purpoſe. They'll Plague 'em as *Muſquitto*'s or *Gnats* do a Man, faſten upon 'em, ſuck their Blood, and when they go to ſtrike 'em they'll flye away. Deſcent after Deſcent will they meet with from theſe Mountaineers, theſe *Flying Squadrons*, theſe *Martial Ubiquitarians*, who, tho' they have no Order among themſelves, make the greateſt Diſorder among others.

In one great Point they'll much Oppreſs the Beſiegers, that is, in reſpect to Proviſions and Forrage. Without doubt all the beſt of the Cattle, and the chief of the Proviſions they have carried to the Mountains with them; and what Pittances of Proviſion and Forrage the *French* can pick up in the Deſerted Country, they muſt gather by ſmall Parties, which, at every Turn, will be intercepted by theſe Roving *Miquelets*.

And if they are forc'd to raiſe the Siege, they'll turn *Huſſars*; the true Sons of Collonel *Paul Diack*: Woe be to their Rear; the *Miquelets* will have nothing to do but to pick 'em off till the Earl of *Peterborough* meets 'em in the Front.

Country-m. Maſter, you have Propheſied well. I wiſh it may prove their Fate.

Obſ. But, *Country-man*, let us, in the next place, conſider the Siege by Sea, as they term it: What doſt think of that?

Country-m. Why, Maſter, if Sir *John Leake*, with his Ships, does come up, I am ſure the *French*, with their Ships, will run away. But I can find nothing on theſe Papers of Sir *John*, whereabouts he is, or what is become of him.

Obſ. But, *Country-man*, here's the Paper Publiſh'd by Authority, which, I perceive, you han't ſeen. It ſays, *That Sir* John *is come up with them, that they have had an Engagement, and that the* French *Fleet is totally Routed; ſo that the Siege is raiſed.*

Country-m. Maſter, I was ſo Sorry, that I over-looked that Paper; now I am Well again. Is it ſo, is it ſo? Mr. *Anjou* Good Night to you: You have made a fine Spot of Work indeed: Have you got your Pumps ready? The *Philiſtines* are upon thee.

Obſ. Roger, the Jobb is over. One *Topſail* is worth two Pieces of *Cannon*. I may ſay to 'em as the Father of the *Poets* ſaid on ſuch an Occaſion.

Maturate Fugam Regiq; oſtendite veſtro,
Non illi Imperium Pelagi. ——
Fly, Scoundrels fly! And tell your Maſter this,
The Empire of the Sea is none of his.

Indeed, *Country-man*, we are very much beholding to thoſe who preſide in our Naval Affairs, for the great Care that has been taken of the Fleet, to have it equip'd ſo very early, under ſuch preſſing Difficulties, and to have them on the Spot when our Ally, the King of *Spain*, ſo much wanted them. We are alſo beholding to our *Admirals* that Command the Fleet, who have ſo very well acted their Part, with ſo much Courage, Conduct and Fidelity. Sir *John Leake* and Admiral *Bing*, can't enough be applauded for their Dilligence in preſſing forward; the *One* omitting no Opportunities of Wind and Weather, and the *Other* keeping the Seas in ſuch Turbulent Weather as ſeldom holds ſo long together; and which would ha' been a ſufficient Excuſe for ſome to put into Harbour, let the Neceſſity of Affairs never ſo much require their preſſing forward.

If the *French* Fleet is gone from before *Barcelona*, then the Town is open to the Sea: It may be at any time relieved with Proviſions; and as ſoon as Admiral *Bing*'s Squadron comes up, the Forces on Board that Squadron may be put into the Town, which Additional Strength will enable the Beſieged to make ſo many Vigorous Sallies as ſhall cauſe the *French* to remove their Quarters.

One thing, *Country-man*, always gave me hopes of *Barcelona*, our Brave *Engliſh General*, the Earl of *Peterborough*, keeps ſtill Poſſeſſion of *Placentia*, without having any Regard to *Barcelona*, in Order to the raiſing of the Siege, which plainly ſhows that the King of *Spain* thought himſelf ſecure in that Place, and capable of defending it againſt a Beſieging Army, and that it was adviſable for the Earl to carry on his *Conqueſts*, and March forward, leaving *Anjou* to Repent of his Enterprize.

It is impoſſible to fore-tell the Events that may happen upon the *French* Fleets Departure from before that Place; but without doubt it will much diſhearten the Beſiegers, who find themſelves cut off from all Aſſiſtance by Sea, which will put 'em in mind of their own Deſtruction by Land. It will confirm thoſe that have already engaged in the Service of their Lawful Soveraign, and cauſe an Infinite Number to return to their *Allegiance*, who have hitherto been kept off by the *Oppreſſions* and *Inſolence* of the *French*; it will damp the Spirits of *Anjou*'s Party over all the *Spaniſh Dominions*, and give the Lye to the *Emiſſaries* and *Partizans* of *France* all over *Europe*, who have ſo much boaſted of the *Power*, and threaten'd us with the Strength of *Anjou's Party*. We have made a good Beginning, and I hope for a good End.

Country-m. Maſter, I am much eas'd in my Mind. Come, here's a good Health to the King of *Spain*.

Obſ. I'll heartily Pledge it.

Country-m. And one more to the Earl of *Peterborough*, our Brave *Engliſh General*.

Obſ. I'll willingly go to Bed with that Health.

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